

The Phoenix Mosque of Hangzhou

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The Phoenix Mosque of Hangzhou 鳳凰寺

When the fervent armies of an Arab God thundered out of the deserts of the west, it was to China that the shattered court of the Sassanids retreated. The T'ang emperor gladly received not only the cultured and wealthy Persian nobility but also opened the doors of his great halls of learning and cultures to Iran's holy books, a tradition continued into the future.

The barbarians of the West came in crowds into the Middle Kingdom, and as by an outbreak from more than a hundred kingdoms, distant at least one thousand leagues, brought with them as presents their sacred books.¹

Iranian eyes turned East once again in circa 1220 in the face of another overwhelming invasion. The notables of Iranzamīn, led by the elite of Qazvin who already had well established links with the Chinggisid nobility, had witnessed the growth of the their empire and the increasing role that people from the ‘western regions’ were playing in the developing empire.² They determined upon bringing Iran in from the cold with a view to transforming their country from a peripheral state under ineffective, anarchic, military rule to an integrated part of a global empire. Pre-empting the new khan, Mongke, an embassy was sent to the Great Khan from Qazvin requesting that Iran be incorporated into the empire proper with a royal prince to replace the despised military governor, Baiju Noyan. The historian Mustawfī eloquently portrays the seductive words of his forefather pleading with Mongke to send an army to rid them of the Ismā'īlī menace and a prince to build a bridge of justice and security across the Oxus to Iran.³

Atā Malik Juwaynī, a personal advisor to Hulegu Khan, saw ‘God's secret intent’ in the benefits realised from the accession of Mongke Khan to the pinnacle of power. Firstly, he saw the throne awarded one whose majesty was equal to the formidable task of ruling a world empire, secondly, in Juwaynī's eyes the annihilation of the Ismā'īlīs rid the world of a divine insult and a physical and spiritual menace of immense proportions, and thirdly, not only had the rise of the Chinggisids allowed Islam and Muslims to spread unhindered ‘even in China’ but most significantly ‘the keys to the lands of the world were placed ready for use in the hands of the [Mongols'] power [*dar dast-i-qodrat*]' and for Juwaynī those hands which were

¹ Cited in Donald D. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, Canberra, 1986, p.33

² See my *Persian Elite*

³ Mustawfī, *Zafarnama*

in positions to exercise that power translated as the hands of Muslims and in particular the hands of Persian Muslims.

Juwaynī was very much an eyewitness to events in the mid-thirteenth century and for at least ‘ten years [he had] set foot in foreign lands’ from ‘Transoxiana and Turkestan to the confines of Machin and furthest China.’⁴

Today so many believers in the one God have bent their steps thitherwards and reached the furthest countries of the East, and settled, and made their homes there that their numbers are beyond calculation or computation. Some are those who at the time of the conquest of Transoxiana and Khorasan were driven thither in the levy as craftsmen and keepers of animals; and many are those who – from the farthest West, from the two Iraqs, from Syria and other lands of Islam—have wandered in the way of trade and commerce, visiting every region and every city, acquiring fame and seeing strange sights, and have cast away the staff of travel in those regions and decided to abide there; and have settled down, and built mansions and castles, and reared the cells of Islam over against the houses of idols, and established schools, where the learned teach and instruct and the acquirers of learning profit thereby: it is though the tradition: ‘*Seek knowledge even in China*’ related to this age and to those who live in this present era.⁵

The advent of Hulegu Khan, younger brother of the Great Khan, Mongke, and of Qubilai Khan, the newly appointed khan of China, ushered in a new era of prosperity and security for Iran and suddenly the lands of the east were opened as never before for Persian merchants, entrepreneurs, missionaries, and adventurers. In the decades following the first Mongol led campaigns in Central Asia and northern Iran, large scale population movement, 100,000 artisans by Juwaynī’s estimation, initially forced but later voluntary, saw the establishment of communities of western artisans throughout China and Turco-Mongolia, a reality acknowledged by Juwaynī.⁶ The original selection process saw in these population transfers the inclusion of many unskilled workers fearful of their prospects should they have been left

⁴ Juwaynī, tr. Boyle, pp.9-10; text, pp.6-7.

⁵ Juwaynī, tr. Boyle, pp.13-14; text, p.9

⁶ Juwaynī/Boyle, p.128, Qazvīnī, p.101.

behind and as a result such workers would have been forced to seek employment further afield in China.

In the Yuan period the Hui-hui (from Samarqand) spread over the whole of China . . . By the Yuan period the Muslims had spread to the four corners (of China), all preserving their religion without change. (*Ming Shi*)⁷

At the time of the Qazvini embassy to Mongke Khan, émigré Persians were already making an impact in the developing empire whether the individuals were the product of the *kesig* such as Sayyid ‘Ajall,⁸ or figures whose work had caught the eye of influential commanders, such as Kamal al-Din, father of Sharaf al-Din, one-time superintendant of Hangzhou,⁹ or adventurers who were taking advantage of the open borders and the opportunities which that offered such as the remarkable Issa, one time assistant to Bolad.¹⁰ With the establishment of the Yuan and an often merit-based environment with the Persian language fast becoming the *lingua franca* of the Empire, unprecedented opportunities were opened for Iranians and examples to illustrate these changed circumstances are not hard to find. The biographical dictionary of Baghdad’s chief librarian, Ibn Fowaṣṣī,¹¹ abounds in examples of the successful where their knowledge of eastern languages is remarked upon such as an aide to Suqunjaq Noyen who ‘kept company with the learned men of the Uighurs and bakhshis, and learned from them how to write the Uighur script as well as their language’¹²

Hangzhou, the former capital of the Song which had retained its air of sophistication and sensual indulgence, had easily accommodated the new Yuan rulers and the legion of bureaucrats and officials who accompanied them. Though the Song Empress Dowager had departed for the new capital, Khanbaliq, with her considerable train in tow, life in this cosmopolitan, cultured and hedonistic emporium continued very much as before so much so that Lin’an, as it was known, soon became, among many things, a major centre for the dramatic arts which achieved an acknowledged golden age under the Yuan.¹³ Meanwhile as the empire continued to consolidate its gains, east and west, the steady influx of Persian

⁷ Cited in Donald D. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, ch.9, p.79

⁸ See Aramjo, PhD; Paul Buell in de Rachewiltz, *In the Service of the Khan*, Lane, “Dali Stele”

⁹ Guo Xiao Heng, “The Study and Interpretation of the first Shanghai Da-lu-hua-chi, She-la-fu Ding in the Yuan dynasty”, 2007

¹⁰ See *Yuan Shi* ch.134, 3249, tr. In A.C. Moule, *Christians in China before 1500*, 1930, pp.228-29

¹¹ Ibn al-Fowaṣṣī, *Majma’ al-ādāb fi mu’jam al-aqāb*, Tehran, 1995; see Devin DeWeese, ‘Cultural Transmission and Exchange in the Mongol Empire’, Linda Komaroff [ed], *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, Brill, 2006, pp.11-29.

¹² Cited in DeWeese, “Cultural Transmission and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: Notes from the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn al-Fuwaṣṣī.” in L. Komaroff (ed.), *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan* (Leiden, 2006), p.25

¹³ See Chung-Wen Shih, *The Golden Age of Drama: Yüan Tsa-chü*, Princeton University Press, 1976; J.I. Crump, *Chinese Theatre in the Days of Kublai Khan*, University Press of Arizona, 1982.

Muslims quickly established an influential presence. Lacking a suitable social centre the community had early on arranged the construction of a small, centrally located mosque. It is likely that more than one mosque was built but today only this one very distinctive building remains. The construction of Hangzhou's Wulin Mosque in the early decades of the Yuan dynasty reflected the establishment of an influential and powerful Persian and Muslim presence in this former capital of the Song dynasty. The mosque ties together four developments which had been simmering beneath the surface of the emerging new world order. It is these four topics which will form the basis of the present study. Firstly, the city and its social milieu, which was the vessel in which Persians proved able to thrive and was conducive to their aspirations and prosperity, will be examined. Secondly, the mosque itself and records and references to the building will be discussed. Thirdly, the importance of the Ju-jing gardens which became for well over a century the central burial grounds for the Muslim community from Hangzhou and beyond will be considered and some of its denizens highlighted. Lastly, the individuals whose tombstones have survived and others who are in various ways connected either with the mosque or with the Ju-jing cemetery will be scrutinised using the patch-work of citations and references scattered among texts, inscriptions and the army of steles so beloved of the Chinese.

Jiang-zhe province was both the wealthiest and most dominated by Semuren of all Yuan China's ten provinces. This development can be explained by Jiang-zhe's position as a traditional gateway state for maritime commerce with the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf and the availability of second generation 'westerners' for administrative positions in the expanding bureaucracy as well as the sudden influx of Persians who were now in a position to offer their services with Iran's 1258 full absorption into the Toluid state. From 1270 to the 1360s at least fourteen senior government positions were occupied by western Muslims which is more than other provinces such as eleven in Jiang-xi, nine in Yunnan, and seven or less in other provinces. Jiang-zhe's commercial importance is underlined by its supply of a third of the taxes for the whole country.¹⁴ In many ways the new state replaced the crumbling Song administration and there was a whole generation of experienced Semuren and Jin officials ready and willing to serve and fill those posts vacated or left empty by the southern Chinese.

Rather than employing a system of ethnic preference the new administration simply hired those of proven loyalty and ability who were of course predominantly northerners and

¹⁴ Yang Zhi-jiu, *Yuandai Huihuiren de zhengzhi diwei*, Lishi yanjiu, 1984, pp. 112, 128, 132-33 cited by Florence Hodous, PhD, SOAS

Semuren. Administrative posts were awarded on the basis of merit not necessarily of ethnicity. Much has been made of the existence of documents purporting to underline the racially based policies of the Yuan leadership with Mongols at the top, supported by *semu* at the top of this hierarchy, then the northern Chinese who previously would have served the Jurchen government and finally the Han Chinese who comprised the Song administration. However the reality of such an apparent hierarchy based on ethnic origins is more a misreading of the situation and an over-emphasis on an inherent inclination and bias towards Mongols. Appointments, recruitment, and promotion of officials under the Yuan was through a complex system of inheritance, promotion from and through the ranks, reward, recommendation, competitive written exams, selection by high officials, training, the *yin* privilege whereby high ranking officials could appoint their relative to official positions, and a combination of all these.¹⁵

The position of the *Semu* in key positions reflects these people's absorption into the empire rather than any racial preference. When the Chinggisid armies moved west, it was the officials of the former Qara Khitāi regime that proffered their urgently needed services. Mahmūd Yalavach was central to the administration not because of his coloured eyes but because from the outset he proved his loyalty and value to the Chinggisid cause. The *Semu* occupied the key posts because this is where they were needed and there were no other people available at that time. 'Uyghurs were chosen to be imperial clerks' a retired sing-song girl observes¹⁶. Whole communities, even towns, already existed in northern China composed of migrants from the west.¹⁷ When Lin'an fell to Bayan Noyen's forces in 1276, *Semu* and Jurchen officials were available and ready to fill the vacancies. They possessed the appropriate language skills, they had the experience, they would have developed the contacts, and they would have earned the essential trust needed to assume high office. The Han, former Song officials, would not yet have acquired those necessary qualifications which were prerequisites for high office. Within a few years those offices and postings which in the early years had been filled by the *Semu* and by northern Chinese were given to the Han and former officials of the Song dynasty. There was no policy of discrimination against ethnic groups. Appointments were made on the grounds of loyalty, competence, and contacts as well as use

¹⁵ David M. Farquhar, *The Government of China under Mongolian Rule*, Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 1990, pp.34, 46-47

¹⁶ Li Chen, "A Ballad of a Sing-Song Girl of the Chih-Cheng Era (1341-67)" tr. In Wilt Idema & Stephen West, *Chinese Theatre 1100-1450: a Source Book*, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH Wiesbaden, 1978, p.106;

¹⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn mentions Simālī, tr. Thackston, p.442

of the *yin* privilege.¹⁸ Rashīd al-Dīn notes that formerly appointments to the position of finjan were restricted to ‘natives of Cathay but at present it is also given to Mongols, Tajiks, and Uyghurs.’ The chief finjan, the so-called cream of or shu finjan at the time of writing, the reign of Temur Qa’an, was Bayan Finjan, a Persian and grandson of Sayyid ‘Ajall ‘Umar al-Bokhārī, the second in rank, was a Mongol while the third and fourth in descending rank were Uyghurs.¹⁹ The details of the administrative divisions which follow this discussion of posts do not mention ethnicity presumably because it had no bearing on the appointments. The section of governorships and the administration of *shings* while mentioning names and titles does not specify ethnicity and racial origins are not always obvious from the given names since increasingly Mongols were assuming Muslim names. For example the commanders of *sukurchis* (parasol bearers) are listed as Isma’il, Mohammadshah, Mubarak, and Yighmish with no indication of ethnic origins while bayan Finjan is a Persian or *sarta’ul* as Qubilai labels him.

The emergence of Hangzhou as a major international entrepôt under the Yuan is evident from the attention the city receives from the Persian chroniclers while other Chinese cities are ignored. Banākatī, Rashīd al-Dīn and Mustawfī all devote space to descriptions of Khunsāī, as it was known in Persian, emphasising its Islamic credentials whereas Wa□□āf concentrates on Khunsāī’s prosperity and wealth.

(Line 11) Description of the country of Chīn: Khunzāī [Hangzhou] is the greatest city of the regions of Chin, “a paradise as broad as the heavens” It is elongated in shape such that its circumference measures about twenty-four parasangs. Its streets are paved with burnt brick and with stone. The public buildings and the houses are built of wood, and decorated with an abundance of paintings of exquisite elegance. Between one end of the city and the other are positioned in three places, ‘Yams’ (post-stations). The length of the main market has been described as three parasangs, comprising sixty-four quadrangles (market squares) similar to each other in structure, and with parallel lines of columns. **Line 15** The salt duty brings in seven hundred ‘balish’ in paper-money [bālesh chāw] every day. The number of craftsmen is so great that in the goldsmith’s trade alone thirty-two thousand craftsmen have been counted; as for the rest “estimation will inform you.” There are 700,000 soldiers in the city and 700,000 citizens [raiya], whose number is recorded in the office of the census and the pages of the register. In addition, there are seven hundred churches/temples [Kalisa] resembling fortresses, and every one of

¹⁸ See chapter 3, Elizabeth Endicott-West, *Mongol Rule in China*, Harvard University Press, 1989;

¹⁹ Rashīd al-Dīn, tr. Thackston, p.443

them overflowing with clerics without faith, and monks without religion, [kashīshīn-i bī kīsh, va rahābīn-i bī dīn] **line 17** as well as other officials, wardens, attendants and idol-worshippers, with followers and folk, whose names are not entered in the listings and census and who are exempt from dues and. Forty thousand soldiers make up the ‘people of the watch’[ahl-i-□erāsāt] **line 19** and the night patrol. When [night falls] in groups they take up their accustomed positions at the gates, in the neighbourhoods, and in the alleys [kūchehā] streets and corners with the utmost care and [allow people to sleep easily]. Within the city there are 360 bridges **line 23** built over canals as ample as the Tigris, which are ramifications of the sea of Chin; and various types of vessels and ferry-boats, proportionate to the needs of so many people, ply upon the waters [bar āb ravān] **line 24** [in such numbers as to be beyond counting] ... The throng of all kind of people from the corners of the four quarters of the world who have come and gathered, for trade and the various needs in a kingdom like this, is clearly evident to the faculty of reason and the aptitude of the mind. These details concern the original capital city **P.22 line 1** But there are four hundred other lofty and extensive cities among its territories and dependencies and the least of which of those settlements is greater than Shiraz or Baghdad. And of these Lankinfu and Zaytūn and Chin-i-Kalān, like Khunzai, are called Shang, meaning Great City, in the registers of the Supreme Diwan.²⁰

Mustawfī whose relatives played such a crucial role in the assimilation of Iran into the Toluid polity,²¹ recognised not only the importance of Khunsāi but the influential role of Muslims in its governance.

Māchīn [Manzi or South China]. A great and extensive kingdom which the Mongols know as Nankiyās [Nankiyas is a Mongol corruption of the Chinese word for barbarian]. It is of the First and Second Climes, and its capital is the city of Khansāy, which some call Siyāhān [corruption of Si-Hu or West Lake by which name the city’s dominating great lake is known]. They say that in all the habitable world there is no greater city than this, or at any rate that in the regions of the east there is no larger town. There is a lake in the midst of the city, six leagues in circumference, and the houses of the town stand round its borders. The climate is warm, and both the sugar-cane and the rice crop produce abundantly; but dates are so rare, and difficult to come by, that one *Mann*-weight of these is bartered for ten *Manns* of sugar. Most of their meat is fish, but beef is eaten, and the mutton is excellent, being exceedingly expensive. The population is so great that they have several thousand—some say ten thousand—watchmen and guards to oversee the city. Most of the people are

²⁰ Wa□□āf, *Tārīkh-i-Wa□□āf*, Tehran, 1338/1959, pp.21-22; see also ‘Abdul Mo□ammad Āyatī, *Ta□rīr-i-Tārīkh-i-Wa□□āf*, Tehran, 1372/1993, pp.17-8; tr. Alexander Morton

²¹ See Lane, *Whose Secret Intent*, forthcoming; Mustawfī, *Guzida*,

Infidels, yet the Moslems though so few in number have the power in their hands.²²

Rashīd al-Dīn as well as giving a short description of the city cites Khunāī's importance in relation to other Yuan provinces, *shing*, and names the Muslim officials of importance in the Yuan administration including Hangzhou's one time Persian governor, Shahāb al-Dīn Kunduzi.²³ The Muslim community established itself firmly in the city after the fall of the Song, building on a mixed 'foreign' assemblage which had existed prior to the fall though not such a sizable group as could be found to the south in Zayton (Quanzhou) and Guangzhou. The 'foreign' community which was attracted to the capital included Chinese from throughout the hinterland which was linked to Hangzhou by the network of canals including the soon to be renovated and extended Grand Canal from the north.

With the throne of the Song firmly entrenched in the picturesque city situated between West Lake and the mighty Che River, the link to the open sea, Hangzhou rapidly expanded as a political, commercial, and cultural entrepôt performing the functions of an imperial capital which included the reception of foreign envoys, among whom Arab and Persian 'people of the book' were well represented, and the acceptance of their tribute and gifts. The foreign envoys included merchants and diplomats who are known to have sometimes settled establishing an integrated foreign community. This wealthy foreign community lived alongside the Chinese merchants from inland China in the hills to the south of the city known as Phoenix Hill in an area aptly named Strangers' Hill.²⁴ They would presumably have maintained contacts with the older and more established Muslim communities of Guangzhou and Quanzhou known at the time as Zayton whose Moslem community is well documented and whose graveyards attest to the size and longevity of the Moslem presence in the city.²⁵

Behind the mosque to the west is a high-rise apartment block which overlooks the whole complex and affords clear views of the three-domed main prayer hall, the oldest part of the mosque dating back to the late thirteenth century though some controversy surrounds the actual date of the construction. Situated beneath Strangers' Hill, the mosque was ideally located at the heart of the vibrant, bustling city. According to a mediaeval map and to the thirteenth century descriptive pamphlet, *'The Wonders of the Capital'*, an 'entertainment centre' of dubious respectability, the Middle Wa, was on the south side of the mosque while a

²² Mustawfī, tr. Guy Le Strange, *Nuzhat al-Qulub*, Leyden, Brill, London, Luzac, 1919, p.254

²³ Rashīd al-Dīn, p.958; Thackston, p.469

²⁴ See A.C. Moule, *Quinsai, with other notes on Marco Polo*, CUP, 1957

²⁵ Chen Daqsheng, *Islamic Inscriptions in Quanzhou*, Fujian, 1984

three storeyed building was on the other side. Opposite the mosque stood a Chestnut Syrup Shop, the P'eng family's Waterproof Boots Shop and the Chih family's Mutton Dinners, while a short distance to the north another theatrical house of disrepute, the Great Wa-tzu could be found close beside the meat market. According to *'The Wonders of the Capital'* shops were densely packed together at this part of the Imperial Way, with night markets that never seemed to close and everywhere places 'where they sell by auction ingenious utensils and things of every description exactly the same as by day'²⁶ until the fourth drum at 2:00 am would bring activities to a brief respite.

Whether the *wa*²⁷ continued to operate so close to the mosque following the religious site's restoration or construction in 1281 cannot be ascertained. Theatres certainly thrived and drama became a very popular form of entertainment under the Yuan regime. The *Wa* or *wa-tzŭ* was a place of theatrical entertainment which effectively operated as a licensed brothel. The *Hsien shun lin-an chih* lists seventeen establishments all over the city and presents the following explanation.

The meaning of the name of the above *Wa-tzŭ* (tiles) is derived from this, that when people come together there it is like fitting tiles together (not permanently fixed), when they part it is like the separation of tiles. The old inhabitants say "After the peace of Shao-hsing (1131-62) Yang, Prince Ho, who was commander of the Palace Guard, considering that most of his troops were men from the north-west, established Tile Houses (*wa-shê*) at the right and left camps of the companies and collected courtesans and musicians to make them places of entertainment for the days when the men were off duty." Afterwards the Palace Board of Works (*Hsiu nei ssŭ*) built five *Wa* inside the city also to accommodate wandering performances. At the present time (c.1274) the houses outside the city are controlled by the Tien ch'ien ssŭ, those inside the city by the *Hsiu nei ssŭ*.²⁸

They have also been defined as amusement centres, 'tile-districts', pleasure districts, containing as many as fifty 'theatres' with names such as Peony Tent, Lotus Tent, and

²⁶ 'The Wonder of the Capital' tr. A.C. Moule, in *New China Review*, vol.III, no. I, 1921. p.15.

²⁷ For an exhaustive study of the wa-tze see Wilt Idema & Stephen West, *Chinese Theatre 1100-1450: a Source Book*, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH Wiesbaden, 1978.

²⁸ *Hsien shun lin-an chih* 19, 19b cited in A.C. Moule, *Quinsai with other notes on Marco Polo*, CUP, 1957

Elephant Tent the largest of which could accommodate several thousand spectators.²⁹ There were at least three *wa*, including the great *Wa-tzū*, in the vicinity of the mosque c.1274 before restoration work had begun in which case it might not have been functioning as a working religious centre. A Court Entertainment Bureau had been established in 1262 in the capital, Khanbaliq (Ta-tu or Da-du) as an official institution and by 1284 it had incorporated official registration of classical musicians while maintaining the distinction between these elite artists and court entertainers. Outside of Khanbaliq only Hangzhou maintained an entertainment bureau.³⁰ The reason why this subject is of possible interest is the predominance of *wa-tze* in Yuan Hangzhou and the presence of a number of these establishments near the Phoenix Mosque. Not only are the *wa-tze* mentioned in the work of local chroniclers and gazetteers but the girls who worked in these establishments were quite prolific writers themselves, the most famous work associated with these so-called sing-song girls being the *Green Bower Collection*³¹ written circa 1330. One major function of the Entertainment Bureau was to provide courtesans and singers for privileged officials, scholars, and rich merchants, the elite of the Yuan, and it is significant that Hangzhou housed the only bureau outside the capital.³² On the 1274 map the mosque is described as a walled garden rather than a temple suggesting a change in status occurred following the later construction of the mosque by the merchant, ‘Alā al-Dīn. If this had not already been the site of a mosque it is intriguing to wonder why ‘Alā al-Dīn would have chosen such a location. The words of the former sing-song girl evoke the splendours of the *wa-tze* before her life fell on hard times. The Ming dramatist and poet, Li Chen (1376-1452) met the elderly woman with a past and after he had ‘called for wine and drank with her,’ he coaxed her tale and the story of the rise and fall of the Yuan, from her.

The beauties of Ch’I, the daughters of Song --- all were thought ordinary,
 All were surprised that I should dominate the Court Entertainment Bureau.
 For popular music, we vied to sing new Northern tunes,
 In the theatre, we tired of doing that old Western Chamber.
 Good farces, especially, received rewards,
 The chords of applause filled the stage.
 Black sheepskin jugs were filled with Persian wine,
 Bright Indian pearls linked together monochrome clothing.
 (Chou I 57; 270-6)³³

²⁹ Chung-Wen Shih, *The Golden Age of Chinese Drama: Yüan Tsa-chü*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1976, p.7

³⁰ See Wilt Idema & Stephen West, *Chinese Theatre 1100-1450: a Source Book*, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH Wiesbaden, 1978.

³¹ See my *Daily Life in the Mongol Empire*, Greenwood, 2006, pp.251-54; Huang, Ch’ing-lu-chi,

³² Idema & West, p.108;

³³ Idema & West, p.108

The mosque would not have been the only building to have undergone renovation in the wake of the Chinggisid take-over of the city. Various accounts³⁴ describe Hangzhou evolving into the centre for the market in Chinese antiques and businesses opened up in various parts of the city to serve this prosperous industry though the Imperial Way would have acted as a focal point. The city's art dealers, scroll mounters, restorers, and connoisseurs responded briskly to the change in fortunes of many of the old traditional elite and the resultant rise of new centres of power, influence and wealth. A leading Song loyalist, Zhou Mi established his art collection in the thriving city which bore few of the scars of war usually associated with a conquered capital and committed to paper details of the collections of his fellow art connoisseurs. His work provides a unique glimpse into one aspect of the exclusive world of the very rich and very powerful elite of thirteenth/fourteenth century Hangzhou.

Though it is recorded that following the Empress Dowager Xie's surrender of power the Mongols moved quickly to secure the royal palaces, their possessions, and treasuries and then transport them to Qubilai's capital, Khanbaliq, some their wealth found its way into Hangzhou's local markets. In fact one of the major sources of art and craft goods was the Guangjiku, a government storehouse specifically established to safeguard confiscated Song officials' possessions. Books, curios, paintings, calligraphy and other precious objects many from the Song imperial collections were sold from the Guangjiku offices. A certain Huang Jin [1277-1357] recorded the following concerning the activities of the official Guangjiku warehouse.

When the present dynasty conquered the Song, a decree ordered that important officials be assigned to the Branch Central Secretariats and begin to govern the [Song] territories. Whatever [Song imperial property] remained in the treasury was to be transferred to the Guangjiku and sold off [for cash].³⁵

Revenue generated from these sales was transferred to Khanbaliq, Huang Jin elaborates, but those set in charge of the Guangjiki are not thought to have possessed the sophistication to have operated the institution to its full potential despite charging the local notables and their families with advising them on the goods in their possession. Records exist of some of the

³⁴ See Zhou Mi, tr. Akeney Weitz, *Record of Cloud and Mist Passing before One's Eyes*, Brill, 2002. ; Akeney Weitz, "Notes on the early Yuan Antique Art Market in Hangzhou", *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 27 (1997),

³⁵ Huang Jin , *Record of the Guangjiku* (1340), (HuangJinhua xiansheng wenji, 9:8a-9a) cited in Akeney Weitz, "Notes on the early Yuan Antique Art Market in Hangzhou", *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 27 (1997), pp. 27-38

very remarkable objects which passed through the halls of the Guangjiki.³⁶ The rise of a thriving art market in the city created another vehicle for social interaction and social mobility as old Song nobility interacted with the new Yuan elite, a dynamic influx of entrepreneurial art connoisseurs, the inevitable crop of chancers, fraudsters and conmen, and a sizable community of westerners among whom were very reputable merchants eager to establish themselves and their reputations in their adopted new home.

As Rashīd al-Dīn has observed, the Muslim community was so large by the time the Yuan had become established that individual Muslims did not know one and other and in the central area dominated by the Phoenix Mosque where they were concentrated, their neighbours were for the most part Chinese. The Chinese steles are unanimous in defining the mosque's location.

situated to the south of the Occidental Quarter of Silk Textiles (the Westerners' Wen-Jin Fang 西文锦坊). Facing east, it is very high. (Hong Zhi 6th year, Ming Dynasty, 1493)

Since the construction of the temple of True Religion in the Wen-jin Fang (embroidered silk quarter) of the walled city of Hangzhou, a long time has gone by. (1743)
Then they [the Uighurs] chose the westerners' Wen-jin Fang [quarter of brocade/embroidered silk] for their establishment, and wrote on its pediment: Fenghuang, the Phoenix (1892)

Today, gateways have again appeared along Imperial Street giving the impression of the walled city within a city upon which foreign visitors such as the North African traveller, Ibn Battuta, have remarked. "We entered the city, which is really six cities each with its own walls, while the whole is surrounded by one wall."³⁷ The Muslim cemetery, the former Ju-jing gardens, including the still standing pavilion of the Muslim poet, Ding Henian, used to stand outside the city walls due west of the Li Bai Temple as it was originally called. The mosque was situated on the Imperial Way which ran north from the Ho-ning Gate, which allowed access to the royal gardens and the palace enclosure, to the Wulin Gate in the north-west corner of the city, the site of both gates being marked in modern Hangzhou with large inscribed portals.

In 1271 an imperial edict ordered the re-surfacing of the Great Street or Imperial Way both inside the palace precinct and outside as far as the Chao T'ien Gate which is just south of the Phoenix Mosque. 20,000 slabs were re-placed to accommodate 'the continuous stream of

³⁶ Akeney Weitz, "Notes on the early Yuan Antique Art Market in Hangzhou", *Ars Orientalis*, Vol. 27 (1997), p.28

³⁷ *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, H.A.R. Gibb & C.F. Beckingham, Hakluyt Society, pp.900-02. Justifiable doubts have been raised about Ibn Battuta's account of Hangzhou.

carriages moved over the ground like flowing water' this central thoroughfare and a few years later it was the good state of the street which most struck Marco Polo. He noted that

all the streets of the city are paved with stone or brick [and that] ...
[t]he pavement of the main street ... is laid out in two parallel ways of
ten paces in width on either side, leaving a space in the middle laid
with fine gravel, under which are vaulted drains which convey the
rain water into the canals; and thus the road is kept ever dry.³⁸

Today the Imperial Way has been replaced by the lively though considerably less regal Zhongshanlu Street which follows approximately the same route as the Song thoroughfare but of the mediaeval sites, only the re-built Drum Tower and the mosque remain *in situ* today. As of mid-2009 the southern stretch of Imperial Street has undergone extensive and dramatic renovation and the pedestrian only areas enclosed within gateways bearing the name of their fang exude wealth and prosperity. Some of the canals remain as Marco Polo would have witnessed them and detailed records of the city before and after the Mongol invasion provide a vivid picture of Quinsai in mediaeval times.³⁹ One of the mosque's steles describes Li Bai's location at the centre of the walled city as standing like an isolated mountain, reaching a great height. The stele pictures the mosque as dominating the river and the sea to the east while to the west it is 'reflected by the lake and hills.' For Dr Ding Peng, an important government functionary at the Ministry of Religious Rites, who composed this inscription in 1670, the mosque was among the wonders of south-east Asia so imposing was its beauty though it is probable that it was the imposing facade, no longer extant, rather than the quietly elegant three domed hall which made such a dramatic impression.

Other than Ibn Battuta's portrayal of Muslim Quinsai, the contemporary descriptions of the city are strangely silent on the mosque and the Muslim community. Marco Polo who waxes lyrically on this his favourite city for more pages than he devotes to any other subject is silent when it comes to the Muslims of the city. Other than Zhou Mi and Tao Zongyi the other commentators on the city omit mention of the Muslims in their midst. However, the two most well-known writers composed their works when Lin'an was still the capital of the Song and it is highly likely that the Islamic community was far smaller and that the mosque had not yet been built or possibly remained in a state of total desolation.

³⁸ Marco Polo, p.189

³⁹ See A.C. Moule, *Quinsai with other notes on Marco Polo*, CUP, 1957

Wu Tze-mu's 'Account of a Gruel Dream', the *Meng Liang-lu*, records a peasant's dream of luxury and indulgence as his simple meal is being prepared by an inn-keeper and his reverie is Quinsai's reality.

In no matter what district, in the streets, on the bridges, at the gates, and in every odd corner, there are everywhere to be found barrows, shops, and emporiums where business is done. The reason for this is that people are in daily need of the necessities of life, such as firewood, rice, oil, salt, soya sauce, vinegar, and tea, and to a certain extent even of luxury articles, while rice and soup are absolute essentials, for even the poorest cannot do without them. To tell the truth, the inhabitants of Quinsai are spoiled and difficult to please. . . . They make arrangements of the flowers of the four seasons, hang paintings by celebrated artists, decorate the walls of the establishment, and all the year round sell unusual teas and curious soups. During the winter months, they sell in addition a very fine powdered tea, pancakes, onion tea, and sometimes soup of salted beans. During the hot season they add as extras plum-flower wine with a mousse of snow, a beverage for contracting the gall bladder, and herbs against the heat. . . . and let us visit one of the chic establishment (brothels), with such promising signs as 'The Happy Meeting', or 'The Seduction', or 'The Pleasures of Novelty' . . . A dozen prostitutes, luxuriously dressed and heavily made up, gather at the entrance to the main arcade to await the command of the customers, and have an airy gracefulness.

Detailed street level descriptions are given in *The Wonders of the Capital* a work which has already been cited. This small pamphlet composed by Kuan-yuan Nai-te-weng (The Patient Gaffer who Waters his Garden), commonly known as simply Chao, is divided into fourteen sections each describing the shops, guilds, markets, parks, inns, and entertainers found within the city.

Four Chinese textual sources are commonly cited for descriptions of Hangzhou as mentioned above. These are the *Tu-ch'eng Chi-sheng* or *The Wonders of the Capital* by Chao whose preface dates it to 1247. The *Hsi-hu lao-jen* (*Old Man of West Lake's*) *Fan-sheng lu* (*Record of the Multitudinous Splendours*) written under the pseudonym Hsi-hu lao-jen, Old Man of

West Lake. It has believed to have been composed circa 1250. Wu Tze-mu's *Meng-liang-lu* or *Account of the Gruel Dream*, which devotes so much space to the wa-tze has been dated circa 1300 by Idema and West and finally Zhou Mi's Wu-lin Chiu-shih which covers a miscellany of subjects was written between 1276 and 1294 after Zhou Mi had 'retired' and devoted his time to writing and observation.⁴⁰

Though it can be presumed highly likely that a mosque would have been built in the city to serve the Moslem community however small that community might have been, the main documentary evidence is found in a stele inscribed in 1670 which states that the mosque was destroyed by fire towards the end of the Song period. This claim is also found in an inscription by the tomb and pavilion of the poet, Ding Xiaozi Henian [1335/6-1424], and allegedly the great grandson of 'Alā' al-Dīn,⁴¹ the mosque's founder, which details that the destruction of the original mosque was the result of some kind of unspecified military conflict.

The mosque had its origins under the T'ang (618-907) and was destroyed by fire towards the end of the Song (960 - 1276).⁴²

Some of them were damaged by fire, others by fighting and arms. The halls dedicated to worship and those of the schools were destroyed and reconstructed several times.⁴³

At that time the Phoenix Temple had already been destroyed by warfare.⁴⁴

A detailed description is recorded by T'ien Ju-ch'eng c.1526 in the *Chin-shi* which places the event in historical context.

Zhen Jiao ssu: 真 教寺 (*True Teaching Temple*) This is to the south of the Wen-chi fang quarter [西文锦坊]. Built in the period Yen-yu of the Yuan (1314-20) by the Grand master A-lao-ting. Before this, when the Song imperial household moved (from K'ai-feng, c.1129),

⁴⁰ See Wilt Idema & Stephen West, *Chinese Theare 1100-1450*, Weisbaden(Wiesbaden?), 1982, p.11

⁴¹ Dai Liang(Liang?, should be Dai Liang mentioned later), *Kao-shih*, chüan 19(should be in juan 11, in juan, there is a preface of Huangyuan Fengya, namely the collection of Yuan poems, in which Ding Henian's brief biography is included, but not Kao-shih) of *Chiu-ling-shan-fang chi*, cited in Ch'en Yüan, tr.L. Carrington Goodrich, *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols*, Steyler Verlag-Wort und Werk, Nettetal, 1989, p.98

⁴² This is from the stele dated 1670 composed by the Chinese Muslim, Lieou Tche who reproduced the text in his *Life of Mahomet* or *T'ien-fang T'che cheng che lou nien p'ou*, Book XX. The stele is kept in an outhouse in the Phoenix Mosque complex

⁴³ This inscription refers in a general sense to the destruction of the steles and buildings within the complex under the Song, Yuan, and Ming. It implies that the mosque was founded in the T'ang though it is not specific. The stele is dated 1892 and was composed by Ma Zhao

⁴⁴ This is from an inscribed plaque standing by the side of the pavilion in which is housed the sarcophagus of the Chinese poet, Ding Henian

barbarians from the western regions who were settled in Central China followed the court in large numbers and went south (to Hangzhou). The believers in the Yuan went all over China as officials, to Chiang (Riangsu), Zhe (Zhejiang), Min (Fujian), Kuang (Guangdong), most of all to Hangzhou. They were called se-mu people. They have high noses and darker pupils, and do not eat pork. In marriage and burial they differ from Chinese custom. They intone the scripture, observe purifications (fasts), and cling to purity. Leaders are selected to control them, called *man-la*. Their scriptures are all in foreign script. They bow down (to their God) facing the wall. They do not set up idols, calling out a special incantation and worshipping only God. Their temple foundation is 5-6 feet high, enclosed by wood, so that people cannot enter it easily. It is popularly called *li-pai-ssu*.⁴⁵

In addition to these two inscriptions and text, a map published in 1274 indirectly attests to the possibility that the mosque was by some means left derelict. The 1274 map marks the site of the mosque as the Wu-lin gardens. However a later map from the Ming period with many of the same locations marked has renamed the site as the Temple of the True Teaching (zhēn-jiao sì, 真教寺), the generic term for mosque which would lend weight to the theory that the original mosque had fallen into disrepair and been left as derelict. That the Wu-lin gardens was a derelict site is further suggested in the observations by the social commentator, Zhou Mi (1232-1298), who refers to the site in his report on the location of Wa-tze, markets, drinking dens, ‘good spots’ and other such public places in the Song capital. He refers to the location of wa-tze in relation to near-by buildings mentioning the Middle Wa (中瓦) on Imperial Street and the neighbouring ‘Three yuan building’ (三元楼) but omitting any reference to the Wu-lin Gardens which lay in between the two. However, in another section on drinking dens a location is given as being south of the gardens the implication being that the gardens was a recognisable site but one which contained no identifiable building.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ 1526, T'ien Ju-ch'eng, *Chin-shih* (The exact Chinese name of this book is needed), quoted in Donald D. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, Canberra, p.113; *His-hu yu-lan-chih* 18, p.239, tr. A. Vissière & A.C. Moule, *L'Islamisme à Hang-tcheou*, pp.88-9, who use a parallel account by Wu Chih-ch'ing, *Wu-lin fan-chih*, early 17th Cent, vol.I, p.35b.

⁴⁶ Zhou Mi, ‘Good Places of West Lake’, *Gui xin za zhi*,

The map is one of four published in 1274 which represent the city, the palace, the river, and the lake in some considerable detail and with enough accuracy for the main landmarks of the city and its environs to be recognisable today. The map of West Lake in particular is comfortably recognisable and could quite adequately guide a modern visitor to the city on a walking tour around the lake and into the tea bearing surrounding foothills. The main thoroughfares, canals, bridges, pagodas, hills and more obvious, prominent physical features are all represented. One feature which initially caused some confusion is the numerous blank square boxes. These are very simply blank square boxes inserted by the mediaeval copyist, Lu Wên-ch'ao (1717-95), who unable to decipher the original manuscript and rather than risk reproducing an inaccuracy, represented each illegible character with a plain box which might at some time in the future lend itself to accurate possible interpretation.⁴⁷ In fact the Ming commentator, Tian Ru-cheng⁴⁸ also made copies of the original maps in which he included the blanked characters though his reproductions are of a very inferior quality. The bewildering sprawl of Chinese characters which spills across the maps are for the most part, names of various establishments with no information as to their nature or function. Many are classed as *fang* which probably correspond to Marco Polo's market squares and exist in the city to this day. From the double bend in the Great Street (Imperial Street) until it is traversed by a major canal there are a total of fourteen *fangs* marked on the west side of the street alone. The basic *fang* consisted of a street, either side of which were workshops and/or shop fronts, running between two gates. One gate opened into the main thoroughfare whereas the other opened onto the canals or onto a street of the merchants' houses and storage depots.

The city map reduces Quinsai to a rectangle though its gates and water gates are positioned correctly and the main canals are accurately represented relative to streets and other features. The 'Imperial Street' runs for more than three miles from the palace compound accessed via the Ho-ning Gate north through the Drum Tower through the city to the Wu-lin Gate in the north-west corner, with a width of up to sixty metres in parts. Both gates are marked today with large portals. The occasional building such as the Drum Tower, the gates, the hills in the south of the city where the palace complex was located, the canals, some streets, the city walls, and some wooded areas are represented by images. On the map of the eastern half of

⁴⁷ See A.C. Moule, Notes . . . , p.12

⁴⁸ *Xi Hu you lan zhi yu* / [Ming] Tian Rucheng zhuan, by Tian, Rucheng, *jin shi* 1526, Hangzhou : Zhejiang ren min chu ban she, 1980

the city and the river boats and Hangzhou's famous bore⁴⁹ are depicted in images as is the palace complex in the map detailing the southern half of the city. The most visually representative is the map of the lake with its hills, woods, islands and causeway. All four maps, especially the city map, are dominated by the minute scrawl splashed across the whole surface which itemises as many buildings whose names can be squeezed in, the result often being a profusion of the little square boxes which so confused earlier readers of these maps. Often this amounts to long lists of fangs and hangs (business houses),⁵⁰ bridges, temples, palaces, gates, lanes, wa-tze, interspersed with specific buildings and institutions such as the residence of the ex-queen, a yam station, the Gong Yuan examination centre, the Yu Chu kitchens, the Tai-xue royal school, the Guo-zi Jian Think Tank, the courts or Dragon's Tongue Street. The existence of Topographies 'of which every province, department, and district in China, and every famous mountain, monastery or college has produced at least one'⁵¹ helps little beyond clarifying the pronunciation or spelling of the very many names. However, Chinese social history benefits enormously from the existence of alternative, informal commentaries, 'random jottings' (筆記, biji) and almost inexhaustible and rich literary sources.⁵²

Included in a long line of names running along a stretch of the 'Great Street', the city's main artery which dissected Quinsai along a north/south axis, are three characters, Wu-lin yuan (武林園) which are rendered Wulin Gardens in English, Wulin being the traditional, literary name for Hangzhou and the Wu-lin Mosque being another name by which the complex was known. As mentioned above, another map published during the Ming dynasty, possibly based on this earlier Song map, also presents the city as a sprawl of often illegible characters. However, it is possible to discern the characters, 真教寺, (zhēn-jiao sì), or possibly 清真寺, (qīng-zhēn sì), the 'Temple of Genuine Purity' that is 'Muslim temple' which, though no longer situated between the Middle Wa-zi (中瓦子) and the San Yuan Lou, (three storey tower, 樓元三), corresponds to the same location as the earlier Wu-lin gardens on the Song map. This would appear to confirm the situation existing when the mosque's benefactor, 'Alā' al-Dīn arrived in the city in the first years of Yuan rule. At this time according to the

⁴⁹ On this phenomenon which still occurs regularly and which so impressed the general, Bayan Noyen, see A.C. Moule, "The Bore on the River Ch'ien-T'ang in China", *T'oung Pao*, vol.22, no. 3, July, 1923, pp.135-88

⁵⁰ "Business houses which employ men under government contract regardless of the extent of their stock", A.C. Moule, 'The Wonders of the Capital', p.357

⁵¹ A.C. Moule, 'The Wonders of the Capital', p.14

⁵² Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life . . .*, pp.18-19.

extant steles the mosque had been destroyed by fire and the site had been left derelict. Significantly the site, no doubt overgrown and abandoned, had retained its name and that rather than being occupied by false claimants it was left as a garden.

Though there is a possibility that a mosque existed on the same site prior to the arrival of the Chinggisid forces in 1276, it is accepted that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn was responsible for the substantial re-building if not complete construction of the mosque and there is some evidence that today’s main prayer hall retains the same structure as the original Yuan building if not the actual walls and roof. “The foundations of the temple were solid and were always preserved.”⁵³ The fact that ‘Alā’ al-Dīn is mentioned repeatedly as the man responsible for the construction of Hangzhou’s mosque suggests that whatever befell the building before his arrival must have been extreme and that he built a completely new building on a derelict site known locally as the Wu-lin Garden. However, a further argument exists as to the actual date of the construction of the mosque after the departure of the Song court. Three dates are suggested for the mosque’s construction, 1281, 1314-1320, and 1341.

The year 1281 is the most often stated date for the foundation of the Li-bai Si, the Wu-lin Temple, the Phoenix Mosque, the Temple of the True Religion, zhèng-jiao si 正教寺 all names by which Hangzhou’s mosque is known. According to contemporary records, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn and his brother, rich business men from the ‘western regions’, contributed generously to Qubilai Khan’s war effort in subduing rebellion in central Asia. In recognition of their financial contribution, government positions, land and property were proffered. The younger brother accepted the Great Khan’s rewards and entered Qubilai’s administration while his older brother, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, accepted land and property, feeling too old to enter government service. The records state that when he entered the fallen but un-damaged former-capital of the Song, Hangzhou, he was distressed to discover the dilapidated condition of the Li Bai mosque which had suffered greatly in a military conflict that had rocked the city in the Song period. Since the Muslim population of the city was on the rise ‘Alā’ al-Dīn oversaw the rebuilding of the mosque and his generosity has been recorded in various sources since that time.⁵⁴

⁵³ Stele dated 1892, tr. Florence Hodous, SOAS.

⁵⁴ See stele of Ding Henian, Ch’en Yuan, tr. Goodrich,; *Ming Shi, Yuan Shi. Zong jiao ci dian* 宗教詞典, *Dictionary of Religion*, / ed. by Ren Ji yu, 1981

Ding Henian is from the Western regions. His great grandfather, Ala' al-Din and his younger brother, Umar, were both great merchants at the beginning of the Yuan when Emperor Shi-zu had his campaign in the West. The provisions for the army were not enough 'beating the gate of the army' he used his own capital to help Qubilai [by means of his own capital he returned]. He frequently accompanied [Qubilai] on punitive expeditions to subdue the north-west. All countries [like-ru] La-xiu Ting he was successful through negotiations and became an official. When he was old Ala al-Din was not willing to be an official. He was specially granted fields and 'built structures' and he remained in Jing. He petitioned the dynasty that they should invite 'Umar to be the Xuan-wei-si of a district [dao]. Later Ala' al-Din caused him to be summoned [to help with] for the submission of tu-fan in which he had great success. And then from Xuan-wei he was promoted to Left minister of the mobile secretariat of Gansu. His [Ding Henian's] grandfather Ruo-si Ding from the north where he was an official of the Jin-wang. He uprooted his home and became the Darughachi of Lin-jiang-lu. His government was lenient and humane and the people cherished his virtue. His father Jamal al-Din was able and just.⁵⁵

Dai Liang (1317-83), the chronicler of the literati of the Yuan, was a friend and fellow poet of Ding Henian whose memorial pavilion still stands today beside West Lake on the site of the Muslim cemetery. Whether Ding Henian's grandfather, Alā' al-Dīn, is the same Alā' al-Dīn as built the mosque is suggested by purely circumstantial evidence, the conclusive evidence stubbornly remaining elusive, as does any other hard evidence about the mosque's benefactor.

Of the three mosques that Rashīd al-Dīn claims to have existed in Khunsāi only the Phoenix mosque remains standing. The steles today held in the mosque's precincts provide the basic facts relating to the mosque's founding, though there is not agreement between the earlier Ming dynasty inscriptions and the later steles. Though it is generally agreed that the mosque in its present location was constructed in the early Yuan period, the existence of a mosque prior to this is uncertain and there is no consensus even in which dynasty a mosque might first have been built. Two seventeenth century steles currently preserved in a small, specially built outhouse of Hangzhou's Phoenix mosque both claim that a mosque was built on the present site during the T'ang Dynasty though no date is given. However, an earlier stele

⁵⁵ Dai Liang, (九靈山房集: 19 卷, Volume 4 By 戴良)(? Juan 19 contains a preface of the Huangyuan Fengya 皇元风雅, namely a collection of Yuan poems, in which a short biography of Ding Henian is included, but not this one.) Dai Liang is Tai Liang mentioned above, the biography of Ding Henian cited above is in Juan 11. Chinese translation omitted this part of the footnote?), Dailiang, *Jiulingshan fangji*, Juan 11, 1b

composed in 1452/3 and installed in 1493 claims that the mosque was built in 1281 and makes no mention of any earlier building.

The temple of the true religion of Wulin (literary name for Hangzhou), had its origin in the time of the T'ang. It has traversed the period of the Song, Yuan and Ming, a total of several centuries. [1648] The mosque had its origin under the Tang (618 to 907) and was destroyed by fire towards the end of the Song ((960 to 1279). [1670]⁵⁶

The earliest stele from 1452, inscribed in Arabo-Persian, says little other than religious exaltations mixed with references to pre-Islamic Persian history and commendations to the Ming monarch, 'May the empire of Dáy Ming Khán endure and continue, May his kingdom abide and his authority be maintained.'⁵⁷ Donald Leslie dismisses these later claims for the T'ang origins of the mosque though he cites [the *Chin-shi* of 1526 and] T'ien Ju-ch'eng's *Hsi-hu yu-lan-chih*, c.1547 for a reference to the establishment of the mosque by 'western barbarians' who had followed the Song court from Kaifeng to Hangzhou in 1126.⁵⁸ These records suggest that Turkish mercenaries in the service of the T'ang emperors had been encouraged to migrate eastward and that in Hangzhou they had settled in the Wen-jin-fang [embroided silk] quarters of the city. It is generally recognised that Hangzhou developed as a prosperous city during the T'ang epoch establishing trade links not only with inland cities connected via the river and canal system but with overseas centres such as Japan, Zhan-cheng, and Da-shi [Arab, Persian Muslims]. However, detailed and specific evidence is lacking until the Song dynasty when the royal capital moved south from Kaifeng and the imperial court was established in Hangzhou, or Quinsai [*Hsing-tsai* literally temporary residence]⁵⁹ sometime after the Jurchen invasion of 1126. Among those who followed the imperial court south were the small communities of foreigners including the Jews of Kaifeng, Muslims from Central Asia and from India, Syrians, Persians, and Arabs.⁶⁰

As a source of possible comparison with the events surrounding 'Alā al-Dīn, it might be of interest to note the example of a similar situation about which more detailed information is available. The incident also concerns a Persian named 'Alā' al-Dīn (A-lao-wa-ting) who in

⁵⁶ tr. Florence Hodous, SOAS

⁵⁷ Agnes Smith Lewis, tr. E.G. Browne, *An Inscription Recording the Restoration of a Mosque at Hangchow in China, A.D. 1452*, CUP, 1911, p.3

⁵⁸ Leslie, p.48

⁵⁹ See A.C. Moule for a lengthy discourse on this subject in his *Quinsai: Notes on Marco Polo*, pp. 4-11

⁶⁰ Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life . . .*, p.82

1271 also contributed to Qubilai Khan's war effort for which assistance he was duly rewarded. The details are recorded in the *Yuan Shi* Muslim biographies.⁶¹ Around 1271, Qubilai Khan had sent a request to his nephew, Abaqa Khan, the Ilkhan of Iran, to send experts in siege warfare, catapult-makers in particular, to help him in his conflicts in the west of his domains and the prince duly dispatched two engineers with their families to his uncle's capital. The biographies of the two Persian experts, A-lao-wa-ting ('Alā' al-Dīn) Mu-fa-li and 'I-ssu-ma-yin (Ismā'il) from Shiraz appear in the *Yuan Shi* and between them detail the subsequent fate of the two men. What is relevant to the case of 'Alā' al-Dīn, the founder of the Phoenix Mosque is the rewards the two engineers received which would seem to be standard payment for such valued artisans. Each received 'suits of clothes', an official residence, and official positions. For the engineers their transfer marked the start of successful careers and for Ismā'il in particular his move east established the foundation for his heirs to build notably powerful and increasingly influential positions in the Toluid hierarchy. Support for Qubilai in his time of need proved a rewarding strategy for those from the west. Though those artisans who 'joined' the Chinggisid forces earlier in the century and who did not benefit from generous relocation packages for themselves and their families when they were allowed to move with them, their descendants often found themselves in favourable positions for advancing their careers and situation. Many of the administrative positions made accessible in the south of China as the Song government disintegrated were filled by Moslems noticeably lacking in *nisba*, normally found in officials of such standing. Just such is Sharaf al-Din, who amongst other prominent positions held the post of *daraghuchi* of Hangzhou, and who is recorded as being the son of an artisan about whose origins little is known.⁶²

The crediting of 'Alā' al-Dīn for the building of the mosque in 1281 is provided in a plaque raised to commemorate the life and times of one of Hangzhou's many cultural heroes, Ding Henian [1335/6-1424], a celebrated poet whose tomb and pavilion sit today in a leafy grove near the water's edge of West Lake. He was buried by the shores of West Lake in 1424 at his own request in Hangzhou's Muslim cemetery which lay outside the Qing-bo Gate at the foot of the Phoenix Hill. The plaque claims that the founder of the mosque, 'Alā al-Dīn, is one and the same as the poet's great grand-father, 'Alā al-Dīn, a link dismissed as spurious and

⁶¹ *Yuan Shi*, c.204, 4b; see also A.C. Moule, *Quinsai: Notes on Marco Polo*, CUP, 1956, pp. 86-88; Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches*, vol.I, pp.273-74

⁶² See Ch'en Yuan, tr.Goodrich, pp.272-73

groundless by scholars such as Liu Yingsheng.⁶³ Such linkage purely on the evidence of commonly held names has often occurred with regard to ‘western’ players despite such Muslim names being in extremely common usage.

The plaque beside the memorial pavilion praises Ding Henian for his devotion to his mother who had disappeared in the confusion of war. He had had a vision in a dream that his mother was dead and in memory of his love for her he had built her a tomb and had then arranged that his remains should be buried along side her when he died. For this act of devotion and filial piety he has been honoured with the construction of the stone pavilion and a respected position in the city’s cultural heritage. He owed his education to another influential woman in his life, his sister Yüeh-ê 月女我, whose biography appears in the *Ming-shi*. She earned her entry because of her martyrdom which is recorded as having occurred as a result of bandits attacking and occupying Yu-chang. She was already a woman of some influence in the city, so when she chose death instead of surrender to rape by the bandits and drowned herself with her baby daughter in her arms her example was followed by other women present, nine in all. The elders were consulted and decided, ‘As the ten martyrs were of a single mind and died together, we cannot bury them in separate graves.’ The *Grave of the Ten Martyrs* with a small stele inscribed by her brother, the poet Ding Henian, was erected south of Huang-ch’ih, the village where they had lived.⁶⁴

An early glimpse of Ding Henian’s tomb shows that the actual pavilion has changed little since the time of the photograph in the first decade of the twentieth century or possibly earlier but its surround is unrecognisable. Apart from the riotous vegetation, two edifices are no longer existent namely Hangzhou’s walls discernable to the right in the background of the photograph and also the porticos of a small mosque to the left and back from the pavilion. Vague references to other mosques do occur in the sources as noted by Vissière, with Rashīd al-Dīn and Banākatī claiming the city to have had three large Friday mosques, and if Ibn Battuta is to be believed, Hangzhou might actually have had a number of mosques at one time but these allusions are not definitive enough to trace to a particular location.

The country of Machin pays to the sovereign an annual sum of nine hundred tomans (nine million gold pieces). The capital is named Khunsai; its wall is eleven parsangs in diameter. In the town, there

⁶³ In private conversations and emails with the author.

⁶⁴ Ch’ên Yüan, tr & ann. Ch’ien Hsing-hai & L. Carrington Goodrich, *Western and Central Asians in China under the Mongols*, Steyler Verlag-Wort und Werk, Nettetal, 1989, pp.282-83

are three post stages. The houses are of three storeys. Khinsai contains three large mosques of the first rank which on Friday are filled with Muslims. The inhabitants are so many that for the most part they (the Muslims) do not know each other.⁶⁵

However, it is believed that the Muslim cemetery had its own mosque even though the Phoenix Temple was a short distance away inside the city walls, a view supported by the early grainy photograph of Ding Henian's pavilion reproduced by Vissière.⁶⁶

Much of 'Alā' al-Dīn's work remains in the main prayer hall which was built according to his directions, combining Chinese and Islamic styles. Its final form which evolved over the centuries was more than twice the size of the present day complex, and from above its shape resembled the form of a Phoenix and hence the name. The Wàng-yuè Lao (望月) or Watching-moon building essential during Ramadan in particular became the public face of the mosque. This distinctive feature, erected during the Qing dynasty, comprised the entrance gate, a corridor and a reception hall, fell to the developers' bull dozers in the 1920s when Hangzhou's city planners demolished these ornate structures in order to widen Zhongshanlu Street. The Dept of Reconstruction of Roads and Engineering Bureau of government of Hangzhou ordered the destruction of the Diwan [gate] and argued about this matter long and bitterly, and the small difference between the two parties led to dead-lock. Consequently these ancient buildings disappeared. Fortunately some grainy black and white photographs and some drawings of the Wang Yue Lao pavilion have survived. It was built in Chinese style but retained a classic Islamic portal decorated in Islamic verses written in traditional Arabic style calligraphy. The name of the mosque written in Chinese above the main portal was the Phoenix Mosque, a name given the mosque because its overall shape, two times the size of the present complex, was said to resemble the mythical bird. The Wang Yue Lao gate-house was a three storey building, tall but not wide, made of brick and connected to the reception pavilion by a corridor. This pavilion in turn was connected to the original Li Bai prayer hall by an enclosed corridor. The whole complex was concealed behind high, thick walls onto which were built the stele storehouse, the rooms with washing facilities, a mortuary, and a small back door. The west, Mecca-pointing compound was rectangular in shape each side of which was designed to mirror the other. In 1953 the Li Tang, the present reception hall, was built as a replacement of the greatly missed Wang Yue

⁶⁵ *Jāma' al-tavārīkh*, China, p.2; See also *Tārīkh-i-Banākātī*, p.340 slight variations. Vissière

⁶⁶ Vissière

Lao. It was constructed in a plain Islamic style and it is connected directly with the Yuan Li Bai main prayer hall.⁶⁷

However, between April and October of this year, 2009, extensive major works were carried out all along the older stretches of Zhongshanlu Street with the intention of restoring Imperial Street with some of the grandeur of yore. Over a considerable section of what had become a rather drab and dilapidated street of neglected faded buildings, the old shops have been demolished, the more ornate facades have been restored, the pavements have been re-laid and along the whole length of the street a small canal has been laid with trees to provide shade and a home for the many singing birds. Each section of the street is now marked with an imposing gateway and in keeping with the imperial theme many of the shops cater for the top end of the market with expensive jewellery shops, art galleries, and designer-label clothes shops predominating. However, most dramatic of all is the transformation of the mosque. The old entrance way with the non-descript, dull green metal gate has been replaced with an exact replica of the original Ming portal, the Wang Yue Lao. Its appearance and dimensions have been faithfully reproduced as is clearly discernable from the existing if grainy black and white photos. Only inside has modernity been allowed to reign with various digital exhibitions, imaginative lighting and photographs on display. The replication is impressive though the attention to accuracy and detail should not be surprising given the experience the Chinese have gained in recent years with replicating various historical sites.

The Li Bai prayer hall consisting of three interconnected rooms is a solid, brick structure and contains in the central chamber a magnificent mihrab, made from red wood, gilded and inscribed in verses from the Qu'ran. The mihrab is set upon a heavy, ornately carved stone altar. This beautifully preserved mihrab has been dated to 1451. Above, decorating the interior of the central dome, is an ornate painting depicting flowers, mountains, birds, animals and rivers contained within the shape of an outlined symmetrical flower which also dates from the Ming period and is in a remarkably good state of preservation. The dome on the southern side of the central dome also has a similar ornate flowery design in somewhat better condition and more complete than that above the central chamber. Other than a modern wooden minbar, the old Yuan prayer hall is devoid of other furnishings or decoration. The floor is carpeted in plain rugs. However, on the exterior walls decorating each corner of the main prayer hall there has been painted some intricate geometrical designs which express traditional Islamic patterns with evidence of subtle Chinese influence. The two wells within

⁶⁷ See *Hangzhou Zhongshanlu*, 2008, pp.30-35

the mosque precincts, one set in the walls beside the washrooms and the other outside the stele hall, have traditionally supplied the Muslim community with a reliable source of clear, clean water and supply all the needs of the mosque. They are inscribed in ancient Chinese characters.

Whether the cemetery came into use before the mosque or whether the Ju-jing yuan (园, gardens) outside the Qing-bo Gate, was converted to a Muslim burial ground after the Persian community had become established remains uncertain. However, references to the Ju-jing gardens themselves can be found in pre-Yuan sources. Qian Shuo-you 潜说友 in 1268 compiled the Lin'an Gazetteer in which he described the gardens thus:

The Ju-jing Yuan are outside the Qing Bo 清波 Gate. The Emperor Xiao Zong 孝宗 [reigned 1162 – 89] lavished attention on it ... other emperors also frequented it down to the time of Emperor Ning Zong 宁宗 [reigned 1194 – 1224] and the Empress Cheng Xiao 成肃. 'Now of the old buildings all that remain are the hall called the Lan Yuan 揽远 and the pavilion called the Hua Guang 花光. There is also a pavilion where red *Prunus mume* trees are planted ...' and two bridges, old pine trees, etc. In summer people go in boats to view the lotus flowers.⁶⁸

In the *Song Shi* there are about twenty short references to the gardens which report that the emperor/empress dowager blessed the Ju-Jing Yuan with their presence (or words to that effect). Clearly, the garden was a kind of imperial summer palace, actually used as a residence by senior members of the imperial family. Considering the size of the imperial retinue, it seems likely that the garden must have been on a grand scale.⁶⁹ In the *West Lake Travel Record (Xi-hu you-lan)* of Tian Ru-cheng the gardens, which stretched from the Qing-bo Gate and the Nan-shan (South Mountain) Road to the lakeside, encompassed 'a scented meeting hall, an ocean spring, a look-out, and fragrant, flowery halls' and included the emperor Xiao-zong's 'lucky walk'. It was said that during Xiao-zong's time (1163-89) the park was very lively.⁷⁰ The art collector and social commentator, Zou Mi (1232-1298), claimed that 'Noble women go to the Ju-jing gardens to avoid the summer heat.' For unexplained reasons the park fell into a period of disuse under the emperor 宁宗 Ning-zong (1195-1224). Zhou Mi described the gardens as desolate (荒芜无修) during these years.⁷¹ No mention is made of the period from 1224 to 1291 the year that Zhou Mi records the use of

⁶⁸ Paraphrased and translated by Steven Haw of Changdu University, Sichuan.

⁶⁹ Thanks to Steven Haw for these comments conveyed to me by email.

⁷⁰ Guo Chengmei Guo Qunmei, p.66

⁷¹ Zhou Mi, *Wulin jiushi* 4th juan cited in Guo Chengmai, p.66.

the Ju-jing gardens as a Muslim cemetery. However, in the maps originally executed in 1268 the gardens appear to be marked though the 18th century copyist Lu Wên-ch'ao has indicated their location with square blanks signifying his inability to decipher the characters. That the square blanks are substitutes for the characters 聚景园 (Ju-jing yuan) is verified by some later copies of the original maps executed by the Ming scholar, Tian Ru-cheng. His reproduction of the Song maps include characters for most of the blanks found in the Lu Wên-ch'ao reproductions even though the quality of his cartography and calligraphy are far inferior to the excellent 1268 maps from the *Xian-chun Lin'an Zhi*.⁷²

Zhou Mi discusses Muslim burial practices in practical terms on which subject he appears very knowledgeable obviously speaking from personal experience. In his *Random Jottings* he describes in some detail the preparation and burial of the dead by the local Muslim community suggesting that he must have been on intimate enough terms with the participants to have been invited to observe and possibly partake.

The custom of Muslims is that, whenever someone dies, there is a person who specialises in washing the corpse who pours water from the mouth of a large copper urn and washes the stomach and abdomen to get rid of all the unclean *qi* (气). Then the body is washed clean from head to foot. After the washing has been completed, it is wiped dry with a cloth. Then a bag is made of linen?, silk or cotton cloth and the body is put into it naked. Only then is it placed in a coffin. The coffin is made of thin pine boards and is only big enough for the corpse, nothing else at all is put in it. The dirty water from the washing of the body is collected in a pit under the room and covered with a stone: this is called 'summoning the spirit'. They set up a table and place it over the pit. Every four days an offering of food is made. After forty days this ends and on a suitable day the coffin is taken out and interred in the *Ju-jing Yuan*. This garden is looked after by a Muslim. The rent of every plot of land has a regular price and the caretaker of the garden has all the bricks, mortar and labour used, which he sells for money. When it comes to the time of mourning for the dead, the relatives all cut their faces (tears of blood), tear their hair and rend the seams of their clothes. Staggering and wailing, they move [the hearts of everyone] near and far. When the coffin is carried out, the rich get beggars to hold candles and scatter fruit along the road; the poor do not do this. Then everyone in order, young and old, bows and kneels as is the common custom. When the obeisance has been completed, they make a noise with the tips of their boots by way

⁷² These maps of Song Lin'an are taken from the *Xi Hu Youlan Zhi* 西湖游览志 by Tian Rucheng 田汝成, printed in the 26th year of the Jiajing reign-period of the Ming dynasty (1547); facsimile edition, Taipei 台北: Chengwen Chubanshe 成文出版社, 1983. The originals can be found: Qian Shuo-you 潜说友, Compiled 1268, *Xianchun Lin'an Zhi* 咸淳临安志 [Gazetteer of Lin'an [compiled during] the Xian-chun reign-period], 3 vols. Taipei 台北: Chengwen Chubanshe 成文出版社, 1970. (photographic reprint of the edition of the tenth year of the Daoguang 道光 reign-period of the Qing 清 dynasty [1830]).

of music and comfort each other. When they have fully expressed their feelings, they get all the Muslims to recite their sacred texts. Three days later, they again go to the place of burial. The rich kill oxen and horses and give a banquet for their fellows, even down to the poor of their neighbourhood. It is also said that sometimes when the coffin arrives at the place of burial, the body is removed from it and buried naked with the face towards the West. [dated ‘spring of the 辛卯 Xin Mao year’ – 1291].⁷³

Stephen Haw, the translator of this passage, has noted the common practice among Turkic peoples and their neighbours, at least in the pre-Islamic period, to lacerate their faces at funerals. The references to ‘tears of blood’ in the Quanzhou inscriptions⁷⁴ and elsewhere could well refer to this at one time common practice of the laceration or slashing of the face when mourning the dead, described by Dennis Sinor as ‘an ordinary sign of grief, loyalty or respect for the dead’ among the Uighurs.⁷⁵

Jiajing refers to another burial site within the city walls on the old Jinan road close to the Feng-le Bridge in the Muslim part of town. Though some Persian and Muslim merchants lived in the exclusive Strangers’ Hill region overlooking both the lake and the wide, sweeping Che River to the south alongside the other wealthy notables of Hangzhou, the area to the immediate east of Imperial Street was dominated by Muslims. The Huihui Xin Bridge (回回新桥) still stands today though no doubt the actual bridge has been re-built many times. It stands between the oft mentioned Feng-le Bridge (丰乐桥) and the Jian Bridge (荐, [薦], 桥) straddling the Zhong-he canal (Middle Canal, 中河). Tao Zongyi writing circa 1366 has described the area between the bridge and the Phoenix Mosque.

There were eight high houses at the head of the Jian (Ch’ien) Bridge, and were popularly called Eight Pavilions. All of them were inhabited by rich Huihui people. Once there was a wedding ceremony which was total different from that of Chinese, inter-marriages between uncle and niece and between cousins were even allowed. Neighbours crowded there and peeped at them. Some of them (neighbours) even climbed to the overhanging eaves, railings and windows, so the building collapsed causing the death of all the hosts, guests, bride and groom. It was a very strange thing.⁷⁶

⁷³ Zhou Mi, tr. Steven Haw, 周密, *Gui Xin Za Shi* 癸辛杂识 [xujishang 续集上], Beijing 北京: Zhonghua Shuju 中华书局, 1988; pp. 142 – 3.

⁷⁴ Chen Dasheng, *Islamic Inscriptions*, p.34

⁷⁵ Dennis Sinor (ed), *The Cambridge History Of Early Inner Asia*, CUP, 1990, pp.304, 327

⁷⁶ Tao Zongyi, *Cuogengl*, juan 28, tr. Liu Yangsheng; Donald Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986, p.93

This Hangzhou-based commentator, Tao Zongyi's anti-Muslim tirade continues with a verse lampooning Muslim names before concluding his tasteless tale with a reference to the Ju-jing cemetery.

Wang Mei-ku, an official of the area, wrote a lampoon, the *Baia - huo wen* [With clever punning on the personal names "A lao-wa, Tao-la-she, Pieh-tu-ting, Mu-hsieh-fei" all Hui-hui personal names" says Tao's commentary, the poem goes on] Their (Muslim) clothes and headgear are covered with dust, their elephant noses are now flat, their cat's eyes no longer shining. Alas, in one day, all their hopes for a long life are gone...The kitchen is moved to the Ju-jing gardens, their cemetery.

The cry "Allah" is not to be heard any more. Alas ! The tree has fallen, and the monkey grandchildren of the monkey Hu have dispersed.⁷⁷

With Muslims occupying the exclusive plots on Strangers' Hill, prime urban space in central Hangzhou and their cemetery covering what was once royal gardens over-looking the lake, resentment against these foreigners who held such prestige and power and were so close to their Mongol masters was often evident especially amongst the Song loyalists some of whom remained uncompromising in their opposition to cooperation with the Yuan elite. However as Jennifer Jay⁷⁸ has shown in her studies of the nature of Song Loyalism, opposition was neither as widespread nor as united as has often been reported. Cooperation with the Mongols had occurred at various levels ever since hostilities had broken out against the Jurchen in the second decade of the thirteenth century and as the Chinggisids inexorably wore away at the Song resistance high level defections occurred at a regular rate and Chinese officials "joined the queue" behind Semu and the Jin to be assigned positions in the Toluid bureaucracy. Seen in this light resentment against the newcomers might have been tempered slightly with Persians and Muslims seen as rivals rather than oppressors.

The loathing expressed by these loyalists for the Muslims has a sense of desperation though it was by no means universal.

Hui-hui is also Hui-hu [a former name for the Uighurs]. Their custom is not to eat pig. It is popularly related that this is because the ancestors of the Hui-hui are descended from pigs. The Tartars are the present Yuan bandits... Even when they bathe, the Hui-hui still stink .

The Hui-hui also serve Buddha. They built a tower called the Buddha Tower which is very high. Once a man making a solemn oath climbed to the top of the tower and called to the Buddha in a loud

⁷⁷ Tao Zongyi quoted in Donald Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986, p.93

⁷⁸ Jennifer Jay, *A Change in Dynasties: Loyalism in Thirteenth-Century China*, Western Washington Univ Center 1991

voice unceasingly. Confused and in a frenzy, he suddenly heard from the air the Buddha answering him. He took a knife in his hand and cut off his male member and threw it to the ground.

Finally he threw his whole body down from the top of the tower and was smashed to pieces, and died. All because he felt that the Buddha had responded to his worship. The Hui-hui fought over his member to use as medicine, and preserved it in a box and handed it down as a precious object.⁷⁹

Zhou Mi, himself an avowed Song loyalist and certainly a Han chauvinist and elitist, has a far more sympathetic attitude to the Muslims he encountered and whom he observed and commented upon though he was aware and wary of their influence. He reported a curious story of a panic rumour that the raising of pigs was to be forbidden, reflecting fears of Muslim influence at the Yuan court, which resulted in the wholesale slaughter of pigs and very low prices in the market.⁸⁰ He is certainly understanding of their possible motivation in emigrating to China.

In the hui-hui country, one passes through deserts of several thousand li, where no grass or trees grow, and where there is no water or springs, and the dust and sand blind the eyes... Sometimes they lose their way, and when the water is exhausted become so thirsty that they drink horse's urine or pound the horse dung and drink the juice from it. The people of the country think it [crossing the desert] as difficult as ascending to heaven. Now the Hui-hui all take Central China as their home, most of than in Chiang-nan (South China). It is no wonder that they do not want to return to their homeland!⁸¹

Among his elite circle of friends were a select group of art collectors who considered themselves members of a particularly exclusive Hangzhou gathering whose collections were the subject of a special study by Zhou Mi. These were the elite of the elite and formed the core of Zhou Mi's intimates and yet at least one of them, Gao Kegong (1248-1311),⁸² was a westerner and probably Muslim and is included in Zhou Mi's prestigious assemblage of Hangzhou's elite. His acceptance into the upper echelons of thirteenth century Hangzhou society signified the social upheavals that China had been undergoing. Gao Kegong was a Muslim from Central Asia who had spent much of his career as a middle ranking scribe and continued for fifteen years from the mid 1270s in low level clerical positions. During the 'reign' of the controversial minister, Sangha (ex.1291), Gao served as a General Secretary (rank 7) in the Office of Surveillance, a branch of the Censorate but following the much

⁷⁹ Cheng Ssu-hsiao (Cheng Sue-nan), 1239-1316, *T'ieh ham Hsin-shih*, quoted in Leslie, 1986, p.92

⁸⁰ Cited by Leslie, 1986, p.92

⁸¹ Zhou Mi, quoted in Leslie, 1986, p.94

⁸² Zhou Mi, collector no.24, 151-52

maligned minister's execution his fortunes improved and he enjoyed a succession of promotions cumulating in his appointment to Hangzhou where he entered the secretariat. One of his first acts was to successfully argue that scholarly families should henceforth be classified as scholar/officials, a status which exempted such families from certain taxes and corvée duties. This decision particularly benefitted the southern elite and traditionalist Song loyalist families which might explain Gao's ready acceptance into Hangzhou polite society. By 1292 Gao Kegong had already been introduced to Zhou Mi and had entertained this leading socialite at his home.⁸³ Gao Kegong earned a reputation for honesty and for working for people's interests rather than for the state.⁸⁴ In Zhou Mi's entry on Gao Kegong (d.1304), the aesthete nowhere mentions the wealthy notable's adherence to Islam.

In fact many of the Song Loyalists saw a reflection of their own plight in the steady erosion of resistance by Jin Loyalists and the swelling of the ranks of the Chinggisid bureaucracy with former Jin officials. Wang E (1190-1273), Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1189-1243), the Jin commander Chang Jou (1198-1268), and Jin military leader Shih T'ien-tse (1202-75) are a small sampling of the many Jin officials and locally prominent families in north China who surrendered and voluntarily entered Chinggisid service for a variety of reasons and whose collaboration proved to be indispensable to the continued conquest and rule over sedentary China by Mongol led forces. The prestige with which officials such as Wang E imbued the state was immeasurable. By the time the Yuan was established and posts in the new government of the south were being apportioned it was very clear that any pretence of continued resistance to the Chinggisids by Jin Loyalists had almost completely evaporated.

Documentary evidence of this transitory period is not difficult to find as far as the southern elite are concerned and the travails of Zhou Mi reflect the changing circumstances of the Song officials as they faced these uncharted waters of foreign rule over a united China. Zhou Mi's select group of art lovers who no doubt viewed themselves and their elite circle as the epitome of sophistication and cultural refinement, contained a number of former Jin officials now in the employ of the Yuan state. The self-regard and conceit with which men such as Zhou Mi and at the other end of the empire, 'Ata Malik Juwaynī viewed themselves is made evident in their writing. It is therefore particularly remarkable that such men were quite prepared to welcome not only former Jin officials and 'collaborators' into their select circle but Turks as well. In fact Zhou Mi underwent a period of profound introspection after

⁸³ Zhou Mi, p.151

⁸⁴ Bai Shouyi, p.

confronting his personal ruin brought on by the collapse of the Song and his own refusal to accept a position within the Yuan administration. In Huzhou his residence, library, and art gallery owned by his family for generations along with his concubines and servants were all gone and at forty-seven he found himself destitute. By 1282 he appears to have come to terms with his predicament and considered himself duty bound to withdraw from government service in recognition of the generations of service his family had given to the Song dynasty. However, unlike Wen Tian-xiang who sought military confrontation, or Zeng Sixiao who rejected any contact with the new regime, Zhou Mi did not consider political boycott to mean total withdrawal from any cultural or social exchange.⁸⁵

The corridors of social power and standing during the early Yuan years were more fluid and less exclusive than has hitherto been depicted. Ankeney Weitz cites the example of Yang Zhen, son-in-law of the former Song emperor, Li-zong, who appeared in Hangzhou not long after the fall of the old regime as a junior vice-councilor (rank 2A), and despite some murmurings of disapproval from die-hard Song loyalists, was accepted into Zhou Mi's intimate circle. Only six of those listed in Zhou Mi's catalogue had actually grown up in the south under Song rule and though considered natural Song loyalists, they exhibited few loyalist traits.⁸⁶ Shentu Zhiyuan was a northern official who had grown up in poverty because of the refusal of his Jin loyalist father to serve the new Mongol administration. Like many of the children of Jin Loyalists, Shentu Zhiyuan entered government service and in 1276 he was appointed as a functionary in Hangzhou's Pacification Commission to assist in the transfer of power from the Song to the new Yuan administration. He is credited with recommending that the imperial art collection be kept intact and shipped to the new capital, Dadu/Khanbaliq. His collection of paintings, calligraphy, bronzes and other art treasures gained a wide reputation and despite a comparatively lowly administrative position, Shentu Zhiyuan became a popular figure in Hangzhou society.

[When Shentu first arrived in Hangzhou], scholars were in seclusion passing down chants [preserving their loyalty to the Song]. But they still wanted to see talented men, and yearned to meet [northerners ...]. The father and sons in the [Shentu] family talked with refinement and collected old books; they had no other hobbies. [Shentu] named his studio Bogutang [Delving into Antiquity Hall]. When guests came

⁸⁵ Jennifer Jay, *A Change in Dynasties*, Western Washington University, 1991, p.207.

⁸⁶ Zhou Mi, tr. Ankeney Weitz, *Record of Cloud and Mist Passing before One's Eyes*, Brill, 2002, p.18

they remained for the entire day brewing tea and chatting; with father and sons all taking part and reflecting one another's[brilliance]. ... A guest asked, "What is bogu?" Shentu explained it by saying, "Antiquity [gu] cannot be delved into [bo]." Liu Jiangsun, *Yangwuzhai ji*, 18:4b-7b.⁸⁷

It was this growing fluidity and relaxation of social barriers in the Song former capital which found reflection in the attitude of Zhou Mi. He included five foreigners amongst his inner circle of art collectors demonstrating not only the social fluidity of Hangzhou, the Yuan's cultural capital but of the aspirations of the non-Chinese to emulate their Chinese peers, a path already trod by the imperial court. For many settlers from the Western Regions Chinese culture including Confucianism was embraced and worn with pride as a sign of their elevated social status, a development noted and welcomed by their Han peers. However, these foreigners, particularly the Muslims, were able to assimilate their adopted culture with their traditional beliefs and practices as the continued popularity of the Muslim cemetery clearly demonstrates.

Not all Muslims buried in the Ju-jing cemetery were from the Persian elite and some rose to prominence within the Chinggisid ranks as artisans. The story of Sharaf al-Dīn, the first daraghuchi of Shanghai county, is an exemplary success story of an artisan whose family were probably rounded up in the first wave of the Chinggisid conquest of Khwarazm. Sharaf al-Dīn who at his own request was buried in Hangzhou's Muslim cemetery was greatly honoured in his own lifetime and his achievements were celebrated on a stele commissioned by his sons, Naīr al-Dīn [Nasuluding] and Mubarak-Shah [Mubalasha] in 1324. His father, Kamāl al-Dīn, is recorded as having been a craftsman who later became chief artisan with a corresponding administrative position. The absence of any nisba or reference to a hometown or any other indication of family origins or ancestral ties suggests that his father was just one among many of the artisans who were transferred from Khwarazm to the various parts of China to work on one of the royal princes' appanages. Again the absence of any detail pertaining to his youth perhaps indicates that he was not trained or enlisted in the ranks of the *kesig* suggesting that he rose from more humble beginnings though not so lowly as to be invisible to the 'Great Ones' who ruled so many of these uprooted men's lives. The prevalence of fully Islamic names in the family and the absence of Chinese, Mongolian or even Turkish names suggests the family's possibly Persian background. Kamāl al-Dīn's son,

⁸⁷ Liu Jiangsun cited in Zhou Mi, tr. Ankeney Weitz, *Record of Cloud and Mist Passing before One's Eyes*, Brill, 2002, p.21

Sharāf al-Dīn attracted the attention of a very ‘great one’, Noyan Bayan, conqueror of Hangzhou. “In the year 1275, he [was appointed] to the Central Secretariat and was recommended to the king by Boyan, who much appreciated his talent.”⁸⁸ Once on the administrative ladder Sharaf al-Dīn was able to benefit from the culture of meritocracy that prevailed throughout the Toluid Empire in particular, where ethnicity and religion did not dictate career prospects. His first posting was in [Liu-zai town in] Zhejiang province and in all he was awarded six postings in the county including an appointment as tax-collector in Hangzhou, darughachi of Shanghai, governor of various small towns, Tongzhi of Yixing, Changzhou and finally in 1320 at the grand old age of nearly seventy, the king appointed him Grand Master and Zhizhong (assistant provincial governor) of Guangzhou. However he chose to resign despite the prestige that the offered position would bring and he retired to Hangzhou where he settled into near seclusion in his house in the Jiubanqian district near the Fengle Bridge. Fengle Bridge is one of the few of the very many bridges named on the 1274 map of Hangzhou which still exists today in modern Hangzhou. His epitaph portrays his last years as relaxed, and describes him surrounded by his growing family, working in his garden, entertaining friends with wine and poetry gatherings, and instilling Confucian ideals into his children and grandchildren, a man in tune with nature who recognises ‘wealth as passing clouds’. One night in July 1323 he summoned his children to his side and addressed them thus, “I have been an officer my whole life. Being clean, cautious, diligent, and prudent are the principles which have governed my life. Now, I am going to say goodbye to you all. You shall remember my words as words for your offspring.”⁸⁹ Though he remained true to his religion and chose to be buried in the Muslim cemetery by the foot of South Mountain and the shores of West Lake, he impressed his Chinese contemporaries and later commentators and chroniclers with his adherence to and practice of Confucian ideals. His sons continued the family’s deep involvement in the Yuan bureaucracy and their respect for and practice of Confucian teaching while maintaining their Islamic identity impressed many.⁹⁰

Another figure of some importance is also recorded in the literary sources as having been buried in the city’s new Muslim cemetery. Dao Wu also known as Shanchu, hailed from ‘A-lu-wen’ [possibly Hulvan between Kermanshah and Baghdad] in the ‘Western Regions’ and

⁸⁸ “The Study and Interpretation of the First Shanghai Da Lu Hua Chi—She La Fu Ding in Yuan Dynasty”, GUO Xiao-hang

⁸⁹ “The Study and Interpretation of the First Shanghai Da Lu Hua Chi—She La Fu Ding in Yuan Dynasty”, GUO Xiao-hang

⁹⁰ Ch’en Yüan, *Western and central Asians in China under the Mongols*, Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XV, Nettetal, 1989.

held various influential positions including Grand Officer or Daifu, Associate Director of the General Administration of Wenzhou and finally he became the assistant Administrator of the Hangzhou Sub-prefecture after which according to the Ming historian Song-lian [1310-81] ‘he died, and was buried in the Ju-jing garden left of the Ling-zhi Temple in Hangzhou City. His son La-zhe-jun was buried with him,’⁹¹

A further figure which has received attention is Ding Wen-yuan 丁文苑 also known as Habashi who was born in 1284 and died forty-seven years later on his way to take up a new post. His paternal grandfather, Amir Ali originally moved the family eastward. He held the posts of Chief Administrative Officer of the Board of Rites, Secretary of the Imperial Archives, Censorial Inspector, Second Secretary of the Board of Revenue, and Deputy Administrator of the Surveillance Bureau of the Zhe Xi [Western Jiangzhe] Circuit. His son, Muxie is recorded as having expressed his father’s wish to be buried by West Lake and accordingly his wish was granted. ‘The Western Hills of Hangzhou were loved by the people in the past, so we may follow [the former practice of burial by the lake in the Muslim cemetery.]’⁹²

Today erected on the site of the old Qing-bo Gate can be found the sarcophagus of a revered holy man of the Bakhtiyārī family and his two companions. Two re-constructed steles commemorate Bakhtiyārī’s presence in Hangzhou. There is some confusion concerning the identity of Bakhtiyārī with a local legend claiming him to be an early missionary who travelled from the west during the T’ang or Song period.

Tradition has it that, it was in Tang&Song dynasty, the Imam from the western regions, Bu-he-ti-ya-er 卜合提亚尔(Bakhtiyārī) came to Hangzhou with his two attendants. He propagated Islam and used his medical skills to help people. He were deeply honored and adored by the Muslims. After his death, they buried him outside of Qingbo Gate. In 1923, people discovered his tomb while mending ancient town wall.⁹³

Because of this association with the local legend the connection between these three sarcophagi and the tombstone of Amir Bakhtiyār has been obscured. This memorial site and the lakeside pavilion of Ding Henian are the only extant remains of the cemetery though the modern public park perhaps pays testimony to the appeal of the Ju-jing gardens. As late as 1920, during the Republican period, a writer noticed that there was a stone beside the road to

⁹¹ Quoted in Guo Chengmai, p.66

⁹² Cited in Guo Changmai; Bai Shouyi, pp.135-38, 342-50, 1985; Chen Hanzhang. p.145;

⁹³ From the stele in the Bakhtiyārī compound by West Lake, tr. Cai Zhihai

the Hupao Temple, near the south-east corner of the West Lake, which bore four Chinese characters meaning ‘Old Graveyard of the Muslims’.⁹⁴

The steles in the Imam Bakhtiyārī memorial site suggest that a certain holy man, Imam Bakhtiyārī arrived in the city as early as the Tang dynasty and spread the teaching of Islam among the populace and used his medical skills to help people thereby gaining great respect and a devoted following, a reverence which persists to the present day, manifested in weekly Friday services of devotion at the site. However, Guo Chengmai has discounted this popular legend and assumes that Bakhtiyārī was a Persian merchant though whether his companions were his sons or assistants remains uncertain as does the connection with the headstone of the illustrious Amir Bakhtiyār Nīlūsiya-Nikūnal, son of Amir Abu Bakr Dawūsiya-Nikūnal, son of the almost legendary Sayyid ‘Ajall ‘Umar al-Bukhārī, governor of Yunnan until his death in 1279. Amir Bakhtiyār died in August 1330. In Quanzhou an Amir Sayyid ‘Ajall Toghan-shah apparently from the same illustrious family is recorded as dying in October 1302.⁹⁵

Other tombstones now housed in the Phoenix mosque paint a cross-section of the Muslim community of Khunsāi, dominated by Persians. The existence of so many inscribed stones is indicative of a large and prosperous community. Not only were there rich merchants and clerics, but the skill of the artisans who fashioned the words themselves and carved the intricate arabesque demonstrates the presence of a number of stone masons able to work in Persian and Arabic. There are a variety of border designs decorating the sides of the thick headstones and the margins which suggest both traditional Islamic and Chinese influence. Though Qoranic verses are liberally quoted on a number of the stones, there are also examples of original Persian verse composed in honour of the deceased suggesting that a hitherto unknown school of poetry might have formed in fourteenth century Hangzhou. The inscriptions are for the most part clearly legible though unfortunately some crucial information such as names and dates, often located at the bottom of the headstone, forming the final lines of the inscription, have been obscured or irretrievably damaged. The legibility of the inscriptions has been enhanced by the Chinese art of ‘rubbing’.

The Chinese art of rubbing dates back at least to the seventh century. Their technique also known as ‘ink squeezes’ effectively ‘prints’ the underlying inscription, allowing the production of multiple copies for storage and distribution. The technique involves laying a moistened sheet of paper on the inscribed surface before tamping it into every depression,

⁹⁴ Vissiere

⁹⁵ Chen Dasheng, *Islamic Inscriptions*, pp.33-34, 81-82.

crevice, and indentation using a rabbit's-hair brush though another method employing dry paper brushed with rice or wheat-based paste before being tamped is also used. When the paper is almost dry, its surface is tapped with an ink-pad and then the sheet of paper is peeled away from the stone producing the sharply defined black and white image of the underlying inscription. The inscription is defined in white since the ink was not pressed into the indentations though of course when the inscriptions are cut in relief the opposite occurs and it is the image or sculptured calligraphy which is exposed to the ink and so appears black. The steles and tombstones in the Phoenix mosque in Hangzhou have retained their paper covering which explains the distinctive clarity of the inscriptions. It is believed that this technique appeared simultaneously with, if not earlier than, the development of printing in China.⁹⁶

Amongst those buried in the Ju-jing cemetery whose headstones were excavated in the 1920s merchants are well represented. The merchants not only maintained their positions of influence but developed and expanded their roles and the case of 'Alā al-Dīn, the benefactor of the Phoenix Mosque, is an example of a merchant using his money to further his own aims and that of his community. The respect and acclaim that individual merchants could achieve is reflected in the inscription on the tombstone (A7)⁹⁷ of al-Simnānī unearthed from Hangzhou's ancient Muslim cemetery. As one who died far from home he is of course honoured as a martyr, 'The death of the exile is martyrdom.' But it lauds his travels, '

he had travelled in the lands and visited the righteous, devoted servants of God, and gone to the West of the Earth and gone to the East, visited Syria and Iraq, performed the lesser pilgrimage and been to Najd, honoured the poor and is spoken of for beneficence.⁹⁸

The praise continues with the awarding of the title of 'Shaikh, the most noble, the great, the generous, . . . ' eventually arriving at his second 'title' of 'pride of the merchants, ornament of the good and the noble, famous in the cities, refined of character, pure of manner, familiar among princes of the regions of the coasts' until it arrives at the climax, 'Splendour of Islam and the Muslims, privileged with the solicitude of the Lord of the Worlds' and ending in his full name. This was evidently a very important and well-travelled businessman who turned to religion in his later years and died revered as a Shaykh and Sufi. Whether he would have

⁹⁶ <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EAL/stone/rubbings.html>, East Asia Library, University of California, Berkeley

⁹⁷ The classification of the tombstones corresponds to Guo Chengmai's listing in his article on the Hangzhou Mosque and headstones, 1995.

⁹⁸ tr. Alexander Morton

known or even have been a follower of the famous Sufi-poet ‘Alā’ al-Dowla Simnānī (1261-1336) must remain speculation.

Similarly, another tombstone from the cemetery (A9) celebrates Shams al-Dīn Isfahānī who died on 24th September 1316 duly noting that ‘the death of the exile is martyrdom’. He is also lauded as a Sufi and honoured as a merchant, ‘the Shaikh, the most distinguished . . . the pride of the merchants, famous in the cities, patron of the learned and the strangers, . . . known among kings of al-’Iraq (the regions of the coast).’ On the reverse there is a Persian elegy to ‘Khwāja Mohammad, Jewel of Isfahan’ which notes that he left for China from the kingdom of Iraq. Another headstone appears to be that of his son, Khwāja ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, who died eleven years later, in 1327, though the verses in Persian and Arabic give no personal details. Verses which on other headstones are attributed to ‘Ālī do not necessarily indicate Shi’ite leanings.

That the Muslim community greatly valued its businessmen and its clergy is plainly evident from the laudatory tone of other headstones celebrating the lives of its leading citizens. One tombstone (A1) commemorates a Turkish or possibly Mongol merchant, Khawāja □usām al-Dīn son of Khawāja Yaghān? □ughril Bak? Yeke Wali? (AYKWLI), referred to as a young man (*shābb*) and a martyr, with verses recording his travels and contact with the ‘righteous’. His death is recorded as 29 Rabi‘ II 707. The tombstone labelled A3 shares many of the features found among the other extant inscriptions though the lower section containing personal details and dates is missing. However from the available information it is evident the deceased is a young man and a merchant. He has travelled and visited (made pilgrimage to) the righteous. He has been to the East and the West, and travelled in Syria, Iraq, Najd and performed the lesser pilgrimage (‘*umra*). Like others, he is famed in the cities with much of the wording identical with the corresponding part of the epitaph of Ma□mūd Simnānī (A7). Whether this signifies some connection between the two, possibly as travelling merchants, or merely a shared epitaph composer or inscriber, remains conjecture. Once again the stone intones, ‘The death of the exile is martyrdom’.

One stone labelled A5 celebrates the life of a preacher, a son of a preacher (*wā’i*□), Imam Tāj al-Dīn Ya□yā bin Imam Maulānā Burhān al-Dīn though unfortunately it lacks a date. Both are clerics and the son is described as a young man (*shābb*) who died aged forty-one. The front of the stone is composed of Arabic verses while the reverse has little more than predictable pieties.

Though the frequent references to ‘Alī do not necessarily denote Shi’ism the clear comparison on the tombstone (A6) between the virtues of the first four Caliphs and the merchant, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullāh, of the great family of Muḥammad ḥalabī points unequivocally to adherence to Sunnism. His name and his honorific, khwāja, often awarded merchants, survive in the Persian verse on the reverse side of the tombstone but the top and bottom portions of the front face are missing.

It has already been observed from documentary evidence the fame and attraction of the Ju-jing cemetery and this is underlined by the presence of amirs in the gardens. The inscription (A13) for Amir Badr al-Dīn son of a ḥadr is composed of Qoranic verses and some lines found also on the headstone belonging to al-Isfahānī.

1. ‘Every soul will taste death.’
2. This is the resting-place of the amir, the most illustrious, the noble, the great, lacking peer
3. or match, source of good fortune, centre of beneficence, patron of the masters
4. of religion, supporter of the possessors of true knowledge, the elect of the beloved of the time,
5. Master of generosity and benevolence, Amir Badr al-Din, son of the Sad[r]

The other amir represented among this collection of tombstones is Amir Bakhtiyār of the Bokhārī family (A11) whose founder, an army commander under the Khwārazmshāh, joined the Chinggisid forces following his defeat c.1220 and enrolled his sons in the *kesig* where they prospered. The most illustrious of the clan was Shams al-Dīn Sayyid ‘Ajall the governor of Dali (Yunnan province) whose progeny subsequently appeared in positions of power and influence in lands in the east and west with even the Safavid historian, Khwandamīr, claiming descent.⁹⁹ A descendant of Sayyid ‘Ajall is mentioned in the stele dated 1670

During the years *hong-wou* (1368-1398), there was a descendent in the 7th generation of Seyyid ‘Ajall, prince of Hieng-yang, named Hache (the Hajji) who went to the administrator of the imperial palace to hear proclaimed there the orders of the Sovereign. Permission was given for the construction of mosques (*li-pai-sseu*) in all the provinces and, during the following epochs, decrees which conferred favours were pronounced as if they were to be a permanent law.¹⁰⁰

Both Amir Bakhtiyār and his father Amir Abū Bakr held either Mongol or Chinese honorifics: Amir Bakhtiyār Nīlūsiyā-Nikūnal and his father, Amir Abū Bakr Dawūsiya- Nikūnal.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ See Khwandamir, tr. Thackston, *Habib as-Siyar*, vol.I, introduction, ix

¹⁰⁰ Tr.Florence Hodous, SOAS

¹⁰¹ See *Repertoire*,

Though not an amir, Khwāja Mohammad b. Arslan al-Khanbaliqi might well have been a minister as suggested by his title, Khwāja. His tombstone (A15) indicates his death in March, 1317 and his unusual *nisba* al-Khanbaliqi suggests a significant attachment to Qubilai Khan's new capital founded in 1272. Another Khanbaliqi recorded as Shaikh 'Umar,¹⁰² was buried in Zayton (Quanzhou) in 1302 but no other information has yet been forthcoming. Khwāja Mohammad's father's Turkish name, Arslan, suggests roots in Turkistan which better explain the use of the term, 'martyr' since, if Khanbaliq had been his 'ancestral' home, Hangzhou, a relatively short distance to the south-east, could hardly have been considered exile. The *nisba*, al-Khanbaliqi, could well have been bestowed upon Khwāja Mohammad and possibly his family if he had been appointed to an influential and central position in the new administration or if the family had served as high ranking officials. On the reverse side of his headstone, an image has been carefully inscribed with no annotation or verses decorating the picture. The image carved on this reverse side depicts a smoking incense burner placed on a table and flanked by two flower vases. In common with the other tombstones the borders of the central design and also sometimes the actual sides of headstones are composed of intricate patterns either abstract arabesques or entwined leaves and plants which bear close resemblance to the blue and white ceramic themes which at that time were a major export item to the west.

Ceramics, especially the blue and white porcelain or Qinghuaci, were exported westward both by sea and by land along the Silk Road to Persia, as archaeological evidence attests. Prized examples of blue and white porcelain produced under the Yuan especially for the Persian Islamic market retain pride of place in Iran's national museums. Cobalt from Kashan was exported to China for the manufacture of the blue and white ceramics and in China the development of blue underglaze was unprecedented.¹⁰³ Along with cobalt western merchants carried designs for the Chinese potters of Jingdezhen in Jiangxi Province to emulate and it has been suggested that these designs were based on metalwork found in the Islamic world.¹⁰⁴ A kiln, the Jiao-tan-xia Guan-yao, was known to be operating on Phoenix Hill in Hangzhou though it can only be surmised that pieces for the western market were produced there. Close by the Palace hill, the kiln produced porcelain for the royal household. Another kiln, the Tiger Cave Kiln, discovered close by the northern wall of the city in 1998, was also operating

¹⁰² Chen and Kalus, No 52.

¹⁰³ "Persian Influence on Chinese Art from the Eighth to the Fifteenth Centuries", Basil Gray Source: *Iran*, Vol. 1 (1963), p.16

¹⁰⁴ Priscilla Soucek, Ceramic Production as Exemplar of Yuan-Ilkhanid Relations, *Anthropology & Aesthetics*, no.35, Intercultural China, 1999, pp.125-41

and produced celadon ware in the official (guan) ware style. It is possible that the famed Iznik ceramics of the Ottoman ateliers might well have been copies of the blue and white porcelain which came into Ottoman hands after the fall of Tabriz in 1514.

Not that Iran's justly famed domestic ceramics industry had disappeared. The initial irruption of the Mongols bent on revenge after the wanton slaying of their trade embassies by the Khwārazmshāh towards the end of the second decade of the thirteenth century had had a dramatic impact on the pottery industry of the Iranian plateau. In Kashan, the centre of the industry, production of luxury ceramics practically ceased from 1220 onwards. The last signed luster vessel from Kashan was dated 1226 and though the Mongol armies did not invade Kashan itself they destroyed the markets domestic and foreign. However what is remarkable is that thirty-five years later, in the 1260s, production again flourishes and distinctive Kashan ceramics again appear flooding the market with widespread demand for tiles in particular.¹⁰⁵

That a large ceramics industry catering to all aspects of the trade developed in and around Hangzhou is indicated by the preservation of the mediaeval kilns as well as the existence of locally produced ceramics, the locally made tombstones, along with their inscriptions, and the presence in the vicinity of a large body of Buddhist sculptures. To the west in the foothills of the tea-heavy hills there is nestled a Buddhist monastery and a maze of monks' caves which honeycomb the surrounding valley sides of the aptly named 'Peak Flying from Afar'. The Linyin monastery dates back to 326 CE but some of its most celebrated sculptures of Buddha figures such as the renowned laughing Buddhas, date from the Yuan period. In fact a great many of the figures which adorn the numerous caves and interlinking passageways would have been commissioned by local artisans. Quarrying and the working of stone and the resulting fine products thrived from the late thirteenth century and it is probable that the various branches of this industry were supportive and linked at some levels.

What connection the Linyin monastery maintained with the court in Khanbaliq is uncertain but it is perhaps worth observing that Tantric Buddhist practices were known to be practiced at Qubilai's court and the khan surrounded himself with adepts of cult of the Female Energy. The two laughing Buddhas in the caves of Linyin might well be smiling at the practices going on at the other end of the Grand canal in Khanbaliq. Phags-pa himself had endowed the Great Khan with the *Kala-cakra-mandala* and in accordance with Tantric ceremonials

¹⁰⁵ See Oliver Watson, 'Pottery Under the Mongols', Linda Komaroff, *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, Brill, 2006, pp.325-45.

including the *Hevajravasita*, the master had also received Qubilai's investiture. Accounts of Tantric ceremonies at the court in Ta-tu are provided by the Sung loyalist scholar Cheng Szu-hsiao who flourished ca. 1290. However, these accounts not only betray Cheng Szu-hsiao's obvious aversion to the Chinggisids but his ignorance of Lamaist mythology. He describes with relish the practices of sexual licentiousness indulged in by the monarch and his attendants but takes literally the accounts of the bull-headed deity Yamantaka and other gods with animal heads clasping their naked spouses in their arms signified as examples of bestiality practised by the Yuan rulers during those rites. If Cheng Szu-hsiao is prone to sensationalism, the basis of his account, the practice of Tantric Buddhism within the Yuan court, is corroborated in the *Yuan Shi*. The biography of Emperor Hui-tsung's favourite concubine, Ha-ma, contains descriptions of Tantric rituals performed within the palace. Ha-ma introduced the king to two monks, an Indian and a Tibetan. Hui-tsung (r.1333-67) was instructed in these secret rituals by the monk, Chia-lin-chen, who assured him longevity in this life and rewards in the next, and according to the *Yuan Shi* account the Khan indulged in the practices on a daily basis and a great many girls of good family were involved along with his brothers and companions.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ *Yuan Shi*, ch.205, cited in R.H. Van Gulik, intro & biblio by Paul R. Goldin, *Sexual Life in Ancient China*, Brill, Leiden & Boston, 2003, pp.259-60